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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/31/2031
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKISH LAND FORCES COMMANDER BUYUKANIT APPOINTED
CHOD

REF: ANKARA 3772

Classified By: Political-Military Counselor Carl Siebentritt,
reasons 1 .4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) The Turkish Council of Ministers, in a surprise move, on July 31 appointed Land Forces Commander General Yasar Buyukanit as the next Chief of the General Staff (CHOD) beginning on August 30 when the current CHOD, GEN Hilmi Ozkok, retires. President Sezer approved the appointment the same day. While the decision to appoint Buyukanit was expected, the timing of the announcement was not. The decision was broadcast the day before the opening of the Aug. 1-4 annual Supreme Military Council (YAS) meeting to decide on the promotion, retirement and dismissal for cause of military officers. The announcement of the CHOD appointment and other decisions is typically held until the end of the week-long meeting.

12. (C) COMMENT: Given the increasing tensions between the government and the military (reftel), the early decision could be an attempt by the government to set a positive tone for the YAS and to start off on the right foot with the new CHOD as Turkey continues a difficult battle against the PKK terrorist organization and weighs participation in a Lebanon PKO. The announcement will relieve the government of a week of press speculation and diversion from its priority issues.
END COMMENT.

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